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Reply to Office action of: 07/15/2004

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1 and 2 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Higuchi (US 5,588,341), Ito (US 5,666,865, EP 0710974 A1, JP 08138527, JP 08138526), Kato (JP 2003317603 A), Naito (JP 10040801 A), Sekido (JP 07032537 A), Urani (US 3,215,006), Yamagata et al. (US 5,267,493) or Yomura (JP 200317858 A). Specifically, the Examiner states:

Higuchi (US 5,588,341), Ito (US 5,666,865, EP 0710974 A1, JP 08138527, JP 08138526), Kato (JP 2003317603 A), Naito (JP 10040801 A), Sekido (JP 07032537 A), Urani (US 3,215,006), Yamagata et al. (US 5,267,493) or Yomura (JP 200317858 A) disclose a double ended fuse puller having two parallel beams joined together by a rib, the ends having lateral profiles forming different protrusions, and the main body of the puller has grooved surface areas to aid gripping, and are long enough to aid in reaching distant or hard to reach fuses and relays. Each of the cited references disclose the claimed invention except for having the parallel beams joined by one rib rather than a plurality of ribs. However, absent any criticality of having more than one rib for joining the two parallel beams, the examiner, respectfully, contends that it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide an additional rib for joining the two parallel beams, such that the placement of an additional rib would be such that it enhances the strength of the tool without impairing the functionality of the tool, since it has been held that mere duplication of the essential working parts of a device involves only routine skill in the art. *In re Harza*, 274 F.2d 669, 124 USPQ 378 (CCPA 1960).

Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection. Applicant's claimed invention overcomes one of the major problems with the prior art fuse and relay pullers which the prior art clearly acknowledges. That is the problem of the parallel beams forcing the puller ends open when the user applies enough pressure on the parallel beams to remove the fuse or relay from the fuse or relay holder. For example, Urani (US 3,215,006) issued November 2, 1965 utilizes a pair of parallel beams with a centrally located single rib and a metal clamp that can be moved along the parallel beams to lock a fuse or relay in the puller ends and prevent the pressure applied to the parallel beams by the user to cause the

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puller ends to open and prematurely release the fuse or relay (col. 4, line 68 – col. 5, line 5, and Figures 1 – 3 and 6 – 8). Applicant's claimed invention requires no such metal clamp. When viewed in this light it is clear that this reference does not teach or fairly suggest Applicant's claimed invention.

Higuchi (US 5,588,341) issued December 31, 1996 does not teach a parallel beam double-ended fuse and relay puller at all. What this reference teaches is a single ended fuse puller formed of a pair of legs (14) connected at one end (15) and having one puller end (13). The puller end is opened by applying pressure on the outside of the pair of legs causing corresponding pair of flanges (16) one mounted on each leg inside surface at 90 degrees to said legs being forced outwardly by contact with a separating section (18). Adding additional connections (15) would prevent the fuse puller end from opening and closing. Clearly this reference does not teach a double-ended fuse and relay puller at all, nor does it teach or fairly suggest how to provide a double-ended fuse puller that does not prematurely release the pulled fuse or relay. When viewed in this light it is clear that this reference does not teach or fairly suggest Applicant's claimed invention.

Ito (US 5,666,865, EP 0710974 A1, JP 08138527, JP 08130526 teaches a single puller end fuse puller which can grasp fuses and relays by only one end. The disclosed fuse puller has a pair of parallel beams connected by a single elastic coupling beam (rib). The end opposite the fuse puller is used to apply pressure by the user to open the jaws of the fuse puller end to allow the fuse puller to be inserted around the fuse to be pulled. The user then must move his grip toward the fuse puller end to lock the fuse puller end around the fuse and allow its removal. To help prevent the user from positioning his fingers where they would allow the fuse puller end to open and prematurely release the fuse the portion of each parallel beam behind the elastic coupling rib is narrower than that portion of the parallel beams on the fuse puller end of the elastic coupling rib (see col. 4, lines 44 – 52, and Figure 6). Adding additional coupling beams would prevent the fuse puller end from opening and closing. When viewed in this light it is clear that this reference does not teach or fairly suggest Applicant's claimed invention.

Yamagata et al. (US 5,267,493) issued December 7, 1993 teaches a fuse puller comprising a fuse puller end that is a hollow rectangular parallelepiped constructed of a pair of wide side plates and a pair of narrow side plates (see Abstract, col. 1, line 64 – col. 2, line 18, and Figures 1 – 2, 10 – 12). Clearly this reference does not teach a parallel

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beam, rib connected fuse puller at all. When viewed in this light it is clear that this reference does not teach or fairly suggest Applicant's claimed invention.

Kato (JP 2003317603 A) published November 7, 2003 discloses a fuse puller having only one fuse pulling end comprising a pair of parallel beams connected by a single rib and further having a special unique protrusion allowing for said fuse puller to pull only a specific fuse from a multiple fuse block. Adding additional ribs would prevent the fuse puller end from opening and closing. Clearly this reference does not teach a two ended fuse puller for fuses and relays, nor does it teach how to prevent the premature release of a pulled fuse. When viewed in this light it is clear that this reference does not teach or fairly suggest Applicant's claimed invention.

Naito (JP 10040801 A) published February 13, 1998 teaches a single fuse pulling end fuse puller having a pair of parallel beams (32 and 33) connected by an elastic connecting part (31) wherein elastic connecting part (31) has a circular arc shape sized to allow mounting the fuse puller on a cylindrical holding part (21) for storage when not in use (see English Language Abstract and Figures 2 and 3). Adding additional elastic connecting parts (31) would prevent the fuse puller end from opening and closing. Clearly this reference teaches neither a double-ended fuse and relay puller, nor how to prevent premature release of a pulled fuse or relay. When viewed in this light it is clear that this reference does not teach or fairly suggest Applicant's claimed invention.

The Yomura (JP 200317858 A) reference published November 21, 2000 teaches another one ended fuse puller consisting of a pair of parallel beams (22) connected by a connecting member (23). Once again the user squeezes the parallel beams (22) on the end opposite to the puller end gripping pieces (22) to open the puller and squeezes the area between the gripping pieces (22) and the connecting member (23) to lock the fuse or relay in the fuse puller (see English Language Abstract and Figure 2). Adding additional connecting members (23) would actually prevent the user from opening and closing the tool. Clearly this reference teaches neither a double-ended fuse and relay puller, nor how to prevent premature release of a pulled fuse or relay. When viewed in this light it is clear that this reference does not teach or fairly suggest Applicant's claimed invention.

Sekido (JP 07302537) published November 14, 1995 teaches a fuse puller that uses one end of the puller to insert a fuse and the other end to pull out a fuse. The removal of a fuse must be accomplished using only the specific end so that the fuse is not

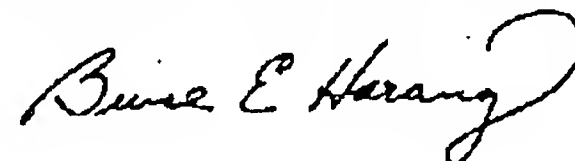
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prematurely released. Applicant's claimed invention does not require a special end for removal of a fuse or relay and different specific end to install a fuse or relay. In addition, Applicant's claimed invention can pull different types of fuses and relays with the same tool whereas the reference fuse puller does not have this option. Because of the need to pivot the parallel beams (2,3) using the coupling beam (4) as a fulcrum adding additional coupling beams (4) would prevent the movement of the parallel beams (2,3) as required by the reference. Additionally, the reference requires as a critical part a pair of drop prevention pieces (9). Clearly, this reference does not teach or fairly disclose how to pull more than one type of fuse and/or relay with a single tool, nor does it teach how to both pull and install a fuse or relay with the same puller end of the tool. When viewed in this light it is clear that this reference does not teach or fairly suggest Applicant's claimed invention.

Applicant notes the prior art made of record and considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure but which has not been relied upon as a basis of rejection. Applicant makes no further comments about this prior art made of record.

In view of the remarks herein, it is submitted that this application is in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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